

REMARKS

Initially, it is noted that the Examiner did not indicate consideration of the GALL et al. document listed on the 1449 form filed August 22, 2003. For the Examiner's convenience, a clean 1449 form is being submitted for the Examiner to indicate consideration.

In response to the objection to the title, the title has been amended.

Claims 1 - 34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by KUME. Applicant respectfully traverses.

The currently pending claims are directed to opening an electronic conference, whereas KUME is directed to automatically obtaining play partners.

More specifically, the claim limitations directed to an area set on a database do not appear to be met by KUME. For example, col. 4, lines 53 - 56; col. 4, line 65 - col. 5, line 1; and col. 5, lines 45 - 52 describe how KUME responds to a request signal. KUME extracts information from a database in response to a player request and places a user in a queue in response to a game request. Thus, not only is KUME missing a request for an area to be set on a database, but KUME also lacks an indication that the area has been set in the database (in response to the request), and also, holding an electronic conference using the area.

In fact, KUME is unrelated to electronic conferencing, i.e., chat, and actually seeks to avoid contact with the other players. *See*, col. 1, line 49 - 52. Thus, KUME teaches away from the present invention.

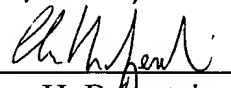
Consequently, for at least these reasons it is requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 1, 12, 23, and 34.

Dependent claims 2 - 11, 13 - 22, and 24 - 33 are also believed to recite further patentable subject matter of the invention and therefore are also believed allowable over the prior art. As such, allowance of the dependent claims is deemed proper for at least the same reasons noted for the independent claims, in addition to reasons related to their own recitations. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and an indication of the allowability of all of the claims in the present application.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
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OTHER DOCUMENTS (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)																																								
				1		GALL et al., "Promondia: A Java-Based Framework for Real-Time Group Communication in the Web", Computer Networks and ISND Systems, vol. 29, no. 8-13, 1997, pages 917-926.																																		
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